

Message Text

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SUBJECT: RADIO LIBERTY

1. NEW YORK TIMES ON MARCH 14 HAD ARTICLES CONCERNING RADIO LIBERTY TALKS IN MADRID AND REPORTED PRESSURE ON VOICE OF AMERICA TO SHARE TRANSMITTER FACILITIES WITH RFE/RL. BELOW ARE EXCERPTS FROM THESE ARTICLES.

2. QUOTE. U.S. AND SPAIN SET RADIO LEASE TALKS. NEGOTIATIONS ARE SCHEDULED TO OPEN HERE NEXT WEEK ON RENEWAL OF A LEASE BY THE UNITED STATES FOR TRANSMITTERS THAT BEAM BROADCASTS TO THE SOVIET UNION, BUT SPAIN MAY ALLOW THE STATION'S OPERATIONS FOR ONLY A FEW MORE MONTHS.

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--- FOREIGN MINISTER JOSE MARIA DE AREILZA IS UNDERSTOOD TO HAVE GIVEN ASSURANCES THAT RADIO LIBERTY WOULD CONTINUE BUT HE HAS NOT SPECIFIED FOR HOW LONG. OTHER OFFICIALS HAVE TALKED OF ONLY A FEW MONTHS.

--- AMERICAN NEGOTIATORS ARE RUNNING UP AGAINST TWO
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CONSIDERATIONS THAT MILITATE, FROM A SPANISH POINT OF VIEW, AGAINST CONTINUED USE OF SPANISH FACILITIES BY RADIO LIBERTY. ONE IS THE DESIRE BY SPAIN UNDER THE NEW MONARCHY TO RE-ESTABLISH DIPLOMATIC TIES WITH THE SOVIET UNION AS PART OF A PROGRAM OF NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS WITH THE COMMUNIST WORLD. MR. AREILZA HAS INDICATED THAT HE IS EAGER TO ACHIEVE THIS FAIRLY QUICKLY. THE PRESENCE OF THE TRANSMITTER COULD BE AN OBSTACLE TO A DIPLOMATIC AGREEMENT WITH MOSCOW WHICH IS BELIEVED TO HAVE RAISED THE ISSUE.

--- AS A FORM OF COUNTERPRESSURE, THE UNITED STATES IS EXPECTED TO RAISE A POSSIBILITY THAT REFUSAL TO ACCORD ANOTHER LONG-TERM LEASE MIGHT ENDANGER RATIFICATION IN THE SENATE OF THE NEW TREATY BY WHICH SPAIN WILL RECEIVE MORE THAN \$1 BILLION IN CREDITS AND GRANTS IN RETURN FOR CONTINUED USE BY THE UNITED STATES OF MILITARY BASES. UNQUOTE.

3. QUOTE. PRESSURE ON VOICE.

--- THE VOICE OF AMERICA IS COMING UNDER STRONG PRESSURE FROM CONGRESS TO SHARE ITS TRANSMITTING FACILITIES WITH RADIO FREE EUROPE AND RADIO LIBERTY, ACCORDING TO CONGRESSIONAL AIDES.

--- THE PRESSURE, EXERTED BY MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEES, IS PARTLY IN RESPONSE TO SUGGESTIONS BY THE SPANISH GOVERNMENT THAT RADIO LIBERTY AND RADIO FREE EUROPE STOP USING A LARGE TRANSMITTER STATION AT PALS, NORTH OF BARCELONA.

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--- JAMES KEOGH, WHO WAS APPOINTED HEAD OF THE UNITED STATES INFORMATION AGENCY IN 1972, HAS SOUGHT TO MAINTAIN A DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE VOICE OF AMERICA AND THE TWO OTHER STATIONS ON THE GROUND THAT THE VOICE "REPRESENTS THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT."

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--- MR. KEOGH HAS RESISTED PROPOSALS BY INDEPENDENT REVIEW BOARDS THAT THE THREE STATIONS SHARE TECHNICAL FACILITIES AS A MEANS OF CUTTING COSTS AND HAS DRAWN CRITICISM FROM THE CONGRESS ON THIS POINT.

--- THE PROBLEM WAS AGGRAVATED A YEAR AGO WHEN IT APPEARED THAT THE NEW PORTUGUESE GOVERNMENT MIGHT ASK RADIO FREE

EUROPE TO CLOSE ITS TRANSMITTERS NEAR LIBSON AS A CONCESSION TO EAST EUROPEAN COMMUNIST GOVERNMENTS.

--- THE SITUATION OF RADIO LIBERTY AND RADIO FREE EUROPE BECAME EVEN MORE SERIOUS LAST JANUARY WHEN THE NEW SPANISH GOVERNMENT ADVISED THE FORD ADMINISTRATION THAT IT WOULD LIKE TO SEE THE PALS TRANSMITTERS, WITH A 1.4 MILLION KILOWATT POWER, CLOSED WITHIN SIX MONTHS.

--- KNOWLEDGEABLE OFFICIALS SAID MR. KEOGH HAD GRUDGINGLY AGREED TO ALLOW THE TWO OTHER STATIONS TO USE THE VOICE OF AMERICA TRANSMITTER AT GREENVILLE ON A CONTINGENCY BASIS IN THE EVENT OF A LOSS OF THE TRANSMITTERS IN PORTUGAL. BUT THEY SAID HE BALKED IN THE CASE OF THOSE IN SPAIN.
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